

**East Providence School Department  
East Providence City Hall  
145 Taunton Avenue  
East Providence, Rhode Island 02914**

## **School Committee Meeting**

**April 12, 2010**

### **Open Session**

**Mr. Carcieri called the meeting to order at 6:00PM. School Committee members present: Luisa Abatecola, Shannon Barbosa, Robert Faria, Steven Santos, Anthony Carcieri. Also present: Dr. Mario F. Cirillo, Jr., Superintendent of Schools, Lonnie Barham, Chief Operating Officer, Daniel Kinder, Esq. and Sara Rapport, Esq.**

**A motion was made by Mr. Santos that the Committee convene in Executive Session for purposes of discussing: Collective Bargaining: R.I. Gen. Laws § 42-46-5(a) (2): Teachers, Principals and Litigation: EPSC v. Rocha; EPSC v. First Student; motion seconded by Mr. Faria. Vote 5-0.**

**Mr. Carcieri called the open session to order at 7:30PM. A motion was made by Mrs. Abatecola to return to open session and to seal the minutes of the executive session, seconded by Mrs. Barbosa. Vote**

**5-0.**

**The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag & a Moment of Silence were observed.**

**Report Executive Session Votes – None**

**Student/Teacher Recognition - None**

### **Reports**

**Student Liaison - Erin Butler presented a report on school activities and events.**

**Sub-Committee Reports - None**

**Policy Sub-Committee - None**

### **Superintendent's Report**

**School Calendar 2010-11 – Dr. Cirillo reported that although the proposed calendar is in line with the East Providence Education Association contract, he does not recommend or support it. At the time of this meeting, he still had not received an answer from the EPEA President regarding his request to start school on August 31 (teachers) and September 1, 2010 for students rather than after Labor Day on September 8th. In the 2010-2011 school year, we are required to close for two extra days on 9/14/10 (Primary Day) and 11/2/10**

**(Election Day) which would cause school to end around 6/20/10; with no allowance for inclement weather make up days. The Superintendent would like to pick up an extra week by starting school earlier. The Chair asked to place this item on the next School Committee meeting agenda for a vote at that time.**

**Qualified School Construction Bond & Residual Bond – Dr. Cirillo presented information on the QSCB program through a PowerPoint presentation; the QSCB program uses federal stimulus funds to finance school construction/repairs at 0% interest. Symmes, Maini & McKee Associates (SMMA), an architectural-engineering firm has been engaged to conduct a feasibility study and to assist with the Stage II application. Ms. Keelia Wright provided project details which indicated items of concern; buildings in severe state of disrepair; life safety issues abound; there is a need for new space at the high school, Career & Technical Center and early childhood intervention. Johnson Controls, an energy service company has been engaged to conduct a comprehensive energy audit, since energy-saving renovations are guaranteed to be paid by documented savings in energy costs. A motion was made by Mr. Santos to approve the Superintendent's recommendation to move forward, seconded by Mr. Faria for discussion. Mr. Faria asked if this would be an unlimited dollar value. Mr. Carcieri stated that it is up to \$35 million. Dr. Cirillo advised that once SMMA's work is finished, we will have a dollar value. Mrs. Abatecola asked if this would include doors and security systems at all schools. Mr. Santos asked if this would be a 20-year**

**bond. Roll call vote: Mrs. Abatecola, aye; Mrs. Barbosa, aye; Mr. Faria, aye; Mr. Santos, aye; Mr. Carcieri, aye.**

**NECAP (New England Common Assessment Program) Test Results – Dr. Caroline Caswell, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment reported as part of the PowerPoint presentation. Highlights of the presentation:**

- Slight constant increase in reading scores (by cohort) on the NECAP standardized tests**
- A trend of increase in writing scores has surfaced; further results are required to make a determination**
- Mathematics has flat-lined in K-8 but has seen a significant drop in the high school. There is a similar trend throughout the state. The new math curriculum as well as other interventions should realize increased scores within the next two years.**
- There has only been two years of science scores, therefore, no patterns emerge at this time. Grades 4, 8 and 11 will require cohorts to be observed for many years.**

**Mr. Faria asked about the High School Improvement Team (SIT) and the many dynamic things going on; an example would be after school tutoring. He requested a complete review (at a future meeting) of what we are doing with the kids now and the curriculum work which is being done. Dr. Caswell referred to the improvements that have been made with math and technology and will arrange for a presentation of those successes. The item listed as Grant**

**Opportunities Report was postponed to the next meeting.**

**Superintendent's Personnel Report:**

**Mrs. Patti Whalen, H/R and Benefits Director presented the Personnel Report on Retirements/Resignations/Leaves of Absence:**

**RETIREMENTS**

**Linda Succi     Principal-Whiteknact Elementary  
Effective 06/30/2010**

**John Held     Senior Project Coordinator-EPHS  
Effective End of 2009-2010 School Year**

**RESIGNATIONS**

**Richard Silva     Science Teacher-Summer School  
Effective 07/01/10**

**Wendy Kirchner     Librarian-Elementary  
Effective 03/15/2010**

**Ray Pinson     Auto Tech Teacher-CTC  
Effective 03/24/10**

**LEAVE OF ABSENCE**

**Rinda Foster     Spec Ed/Resource-EPHS  
2010-2011 School Year**

**Chris Whorf Girl's Track-RMS (1 Year)**

**FAMILY MEDICAL LEAVE**

**Jennifer Marcello Occupational Therapist-**

**Whiteknact/Oldham**

**Effective Approx. 09/07/10-10/06/10**

**Denise Swan Grade 5-Orlo Elementary**

**Effective 05/10/10-End of 09/10**

**School Year**

**Jennifer Carney English-EPHS**

**Effective 4/16/10-06/08/10**

**Katherine Capron Elementary Teacher-Grade 4**

**Whiteknact**

**Effective 09/07/10-10/06/10**

**Mr. Santos recognized Mr. Held and expressed appreciation for his efforts. Dr. Cirillo recognized Dr. Linda Succi and Mr. Held for their years of service in East Providence; they will be greatly missed.**

**Financial Report - Lonnie Barham, Chief Financial Officer reported that General Assembly cuts will affect us this fiscal year with a possible loss of \$1.1 million dollars as of 7/1/10. The percentage of**

Revenue received which should be at about 42%, is slightly below that; however, the state aid payments should be received in April and October as planned. Expenditures, at 45.52%, are on target at this time. Mr. Faria questioned the \$500,000 amount listed under additional revenue sources for the sale of a building. Dr. Cirillo explained that he met with the Director of the Montessori School and the sale of the Grove Avenue school building should take place before the fiscal year end and is set at \$450,000. Mr. Faria and Mr. Santos asked the Superintendent to put together a plan explaining how the deficit reduction plan be worked out and to place it on the website.

## **Consent Agenda**

**Approval of Minutes – A motion was made by Mr. Santos to approve the minutes of the meetings held on February 8, 2010 and February 26, 2010, seconded by Mr. Faria. Vote 5-0.**

**Personnel Appointments – Mrs. Patti Whalen, H/R and Benefits Director presented the Personnel Report on:**

## **APPOINTMENTS**

**Jennifer Cahoon     Fine Arts/Art-East Providence High  
Department Head  
Remainder of 09-10 school year**

**Maryann Lasorsa     Fine Arts/Music-EPHS Dept. Head**

**Remainder of 09-10 school year**

**Daniel Cabral     Assistant Boys' Volleyball Coach-EPHS**

**Bob Duarte     Girls' Cross Country Coach-EPHS**

**Tricia Barry     Girl's Track Coach-MMS**

**William Poland     Maintenance Mechanic B**

**Plumber-District-Eff. 04/05/10**

**Cheryl Gibbs     Summer School Principal**

**Waddington Elementary School**

**Extended School Year (1Year)**

**Paul Amaral     Boys Lacrosse Coach (one Year)**

**Motion: Mr. Faria/Second: Mr. Santos. Vote 5-0.**

**Awarding of Bids – Mr. Barham requested that the School Committee award a bid to J.J. Gregory & Son, Inc. in the amount of \$38,295.00 for the purchase of a utility tractor for use at East Providence High School. A motion was made to approve by Mrs. Barbosa, seconded by Mr. Santos. Discussion: Mr. Faria questioned why this work could not be done through the city, rather than purchasing equipment. Mr. Barham explained that it would not work out because they would need it at the same time as the School Department. Mr. Barham also**



**explained that this is good for both the School Department and the Career & Technical School landscaping program students, since we will still be responsible for the largest campus. Roll call vote: Mrs. Abatecola, aye; Mrs. Barbosa, aye; Mr. Faria, nay; Mr. Santos, aye; Mr. Carcieri, aye; motion carried 4-1.**

#### **Requisitions - Bill Lists**

<b>Warrant #976</b>	<b>3/11/10</b>	<b>\$ 26,924.44</b>	<b>Federal Grants</b>
<b>Warrant #977</b>	<b>3/11/10</b>	<b>\$ 2,299.75</b>	<b>General Fund</b>
<b>Warrant #979</b>	<b>3/12/10</b>	<b>\$ 25.00</b>	<b>General Fund</b>
<b>Warrant #980</b>	<b>3/29/10</b>	<b>\$ 25,000.00</b>	<b>Federal Grants</b>
<b>Warrant #981</b>	<b>4/7/10</b>	<b>\$ 366,718.33</b>	<b>Federal Grants</b>
<b>Warrant #982</b>	<b>4/12/10</b>	<b>\$1,038,007.22</b>	<b>General Fund</b>
<b>Warrant #983</b>	<b>4/12/10</b>	<b>\$ 799,547.67</b>	<b>General Fund</b>

**Motion: Mr. Faria/Second: Mrs. Abatecola. Vote 5-0.**

#### **Action Items**

**Energy Star Policy - Second Passage - Motion by Mr. Faria, seconded by Mrs. Barbosa. Vote 5-0.**

**Dr. Cirillo explained that the Qualified School Construction Bond process required the adoption of an energy policy.**

**School Committee By-Laws - Public Comment Policy – Second passage - Mr. Carcieri requested passage. Motion by Mrs. Barbosa,**

**seconded by Mr. Faria. Roll call vote: Mrs. Abatecola, aye; Mrs. Barbosa, aye; Mr. Faria, aye; Mr. Santos, aye; Mr. Carcieri, aye.**

**New Business – Dr. Cirillo recommended that the School Committee approve first passage of the following policies: Anti-Bullying – Amended Policy and a new ELL Instructional Program Staffing Policy. The Racial Harassment Policy was tabled for further legal review.**

**Mr. Faria felt that good, concise policies were developed for bullying and racial harassment after sub-committee discussions; he would like to see a district plan for all to follow. Dr. Cirillo will work on the protocol and guidelines.**

**Dr. Cirillo explained that the sub-committee has been working on updating the policy book. The Anti-Bullying policy includes “cyber” bullying. Mrs. Barbosa said the language puts responsibility on the Superintendent to provide staff training within a specified time frame. Mr. Santos felt that a district policy is necessary so everyone will know what is expected of them; because of recent incidents, people are finally beginning to understand the serious nature of bullying and what can happen; it is definitely on a different level now. He applauds administration for recognizing these behaviors. Mrs. Barbosa sees the need to make sure it is enforced.**

**Mr. Faria said it is most important for parents and students K-12 that they should not have to put up with bullying; it is imperative for school districts and parents to talk to kids about it; the important message is to get someone to help; we need to recognize every situation and stay on top of it.**

**Dr. Cirillo recognized the very important work of the policy sub-committee, which included School Committee members, Mr. Faria and Mrs. Barbosa, along with central office staff members.**

**The School Committee approved sending the following Resolutions to the General Assembly opposing legislation regarding:**

**Binding Arbitration - The East Providence School Committee opposed and rejected any and all binding arbitration legislation currently being considered for teacher and other school employee contracts.**

**Motion by Mr. Faria/Seconded by Mr. Santos. Roll call vote: Mrs. Abatecola, aye; Mrs. Barbosa, aye; Mr. Faria, aye; Mr. Santos, aye; Mr. Carcieri, aye.**

**Contract Continuation – The East Providence School Committee opposed and rejected legislation that mandates expired teacher contracts must continue at the existing terms and conditions.**

**Motion by Mr. Faria, seconded by Mrs. Barbosa. Roll call vote: Roll call vote: Mrs. Abatecola, nay; Mrs. Barbosa, aye; Mr. Faria, aye; Mr.**

**Santos, aye; Mr. Carcieri, aye. Vote 4-1.**

**Support of Legislative Amendments: Protect RI Cities/Towns - The East Providence School Committee supported legislative reform necessary to adequately protect municipal governments, their officials and employees and the taxpayers from inequitable treatment due to the current state of the law with respect to municipal liability.**

**Motion by Mr. Faria/Seconded by Mrs. Barbosa. Roll call vote: Mrs. Abatecola, aye; Mrs. Barbosa, aye; Mr. Faria, aye; Mr. Santos, aye; Mr. Carcieri, aye.**

### **Public Comment-Communications**

**Valerie Lawson, 122 Hoyt Avenue, said she did read about the Public Comment policy change from a Journal article; she wanted to be on record to applaud the changes; she opposed it before. The second part is the same as it was previously; she said Dr. Cirillo read off some resolutions, but many people do not know what they are about or may have questions about them; the end of the policy puts us back where we were. If something comes up to speak during the evening and the item is not on the agenda, it should still be considered. She believed that no limitations would be the best policy.**

**Mr. Carcieri said this has been talked about before; there are many places where you cannot even testify at a meeting unless you register and sit down. The School Committee is trying to accommodate**

everyone as much as possible and is not limiting discussion, but cannot have people popping up while trying to conduct business. He hopes people will use both opportunities to talk; he thinks it is a pretty open process.

Ms. Lawson said she cannot speak on the binding arbitration resolution voted on earlier; people may not be informed. Mrs. Barbosa said she can bring up any items at meetings and to call her.

Mr. Carcieri said that people can call the Superintendent's office and everyone should know the rules by now. Ms. Lawson felt that it was in the best interest of the community not to be required to sign up.

Mr. Robert Enos questioned the deficit and a one million dollar mistake; who is the responsible person in charge. As a taxpayer, he hears the financial report but still does not know where we stand and he is tired of hearing about the state. Why buy a tractor when you have a deficit. Mr. Carcieri countered that the tractor is not the biggest issue they have had to deal with; the district still needs the one million dollars to run; it was just not reported; the School Department is in the middle of an investigation. The School Committee inherited a system with lots of problems; special education reporting did not take place, the administration uncovered it and they are in the process of determining who is responsible. They did not try to hide anything. Mismanagement from routed out of the CTC and a lot is being done; there are mistakes absolutely, but it

**is how we deal with it; we uncovered it and put it out. Mr. Carcieri said the School Committee inherited this and the administration is going through it piece by piece, which is what they should be doing and the School Committee supports that; we do not cover it up. Mr. Carcieri referred to the slides showing the buildings falling down; that did not happen last year. This amount of review is not easy and it is difficult without money. Discussion regarding the bond referendum.**

**In answer to a question from Mr. Enos regarding the drop-out rate of high school students, Dr. Cirillo explained that students are assigned to cohorts based on when they first enter grades 9-12 in a RI public school system; the numbers are accurately reported.**

**Announcements – Mr. Faria had several announcements.**

**A motion was made by Mr. Faria to adjourn at 10:00 PM, seconded by Mr. Santos. Vote 5-0.**

**Respectfully submitted,**

**Patricia A. Iannelli, Administrative Assistant**

**Shannon Barbosa, Clerk of the Committee**